

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
RESOURCE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

August 10, 2009

City of Chula Vista, Council Chambers
276 Fourth Avenue

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER By Chair Stillman at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Stillman, Vice Chair Gilgun, Commissioners Cory and Mosolgo

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioners Rahimzadeh and Ulloa, excused

STAFF PRESENT: Conservation & Environmental Services Director Meacham, Environmental Resource Manager Reed, Deputy Building Official El-Khazen, Advanced Planning Manager Batchelder, Sr. Secretary Fields

OTHERS PRESENT: None

MOTION TO EXCUSE: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

None

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

INFORMATION ITEMS:

None

ACTION ITEMS

1. Climate Measures 12-month Progress Report

Environmental Resource Manager Reed gave an introduction and background of the Climate Protection Measures and went over the 7 Climate Measures of the program. He indicated that staff has continued to have monthly coordination meetings with the City Manager's Office and that a number of stakeholder outreach activities had been held. He added that during the last six months, the City began as the host of San Diego Regional Climate Protection Initiative. Manager Reed mentioned that Councilmember Bensoussan had represented the City at the International Climate Adaptation Conference in Sevilla, Spain. He also stated that the City had been recognized for a number of awards including a Flex Your Power Award Honoree for our efforts in energy efficiency on our municipal buildings, and the first ever Sierra Club Cool City

Award for our leadership in the region with our climate action plan. He indicated that the next administrative step would be returning to the RCC in September with our 2008 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory.

Deputy Building Official El-Khazen gave an update on Climate Measure 4 of the Climate Protection Measures. He discussed the original components of the measure and the updates to those components. He also stated that they were moving forward with two ordinances regarding the Green Building Codes—the green building ordinance that addresses indoor air quality and water conservation, and the increased energy efficiency ordinance. He additionally gave a summary of the status of four other components: Green Building Standards, Increased Energy Efficiency Standards, Green Awareness Program, and Policy Guidelines and Regulatory Amendments. El-Khazen stated that the next steps regarding the increased energy efficiency ordinance would be to present it to Council in October for the first reading, then submit it to the CEC for approval, and then go back to Council for a second reading. He anticipates an effective date of February 2010.

Commissioner Mosolgo asked regarding the water conservation policy whether there were any provisions in the ordinance regarding dishwasher or washing machine use. Deputy Building Official El-Khazen responded that he did not believe so. Chair Stillman asked Commissioner Mosolgo if he had any recommendations on energy-efficient appliances that might go into apartment buildings. Commissioner Mosolgo mentioned gray water systems that had been discussed at previous meetings, but it that still needed to pass through more regulations before it would be fully implemented. Building Official El-Khazen mentioned some state regulations and actions where the state is trying to facilitate the installation of gray water systems for home owners. Manager Reed added that there will also be a reference to gray water use in the new landscape ordinance that will be coming back to the RCC and to the Council as part of Measure 7.

Director Meacham spoke briefly on the Energy Subcommittee's discussion on permit levels for single-family homes, low-rises and high-rises, and the associated water allowances and energy goals. He said that in order to meet these measures, developers would be putting in things like appliances with low water and energy consumption. Chair Stillman added that she saw no reason, with the high-level quality development they're trying to do in the eastern urban core, for developers not to confirm to a 20% standard. She stated that this commission should be asking that new development should be of a higher standard in terms of energy acceptance.

Commissioner Gilgun stated that she agreed with the Energy Subcommittee that going with the higher standards is a good idea, and she said that she appreciated that we were providing information to the builders so that they can meet those standards.

Chair Stillman introduced Advanced Planning Manager Batchelder who continued the update on Climate Measure 4. He discussed the three parts of the community design and regulatory provisions, which include Community Sustainability Programs, Zoning and Design Guidelines, and CVRP/NECSC Community Site Design Program. Director Meacham added that the Conservation Department had assisted Development Services, Advanced Planning Manager Batchelder's department, in identifying some funding for the Wakeland project, Chula Vista's first platinum facility of any kind, and the first residential platinum facility. He stated that that was a concrete example of a site-specific effort on a community-wide basis.

Commissioner Cory commended staff for all their work, and stated that she was happy to hear that the community design standards were to be walkable.

Environmental Resource Manager Reed gave an update on Measures 1 and 2. Measure 1 involves a requirement that 100% of the replacement vehicles for our fleet be replaced with alternative fuel vehicles or hybrids. There are currently 14 hybrids in our fleet, and because of budget issues, there are no vehicle replacement plans in the current fiscal year. We do have plans in the fall to install a biodiesel tank at the Public Works Corp Yard, and as a result, we would be able to convert 128 medium and heavy duty vehicles to biodiesel. With that, we will have our fleet at about 23% alternative fuel vehicles. Measure 2 takes this approach and applies it to our city-contracted fleet services such as street sweeping companies, transit, waste haulers, etc.

Vice Chair Gilgun asked if tow truck companies and trash haulers had been informed about what we'll be looking for when we renew the contract. Manager Reed responded that they had.

Environmental Resource Manager Reed continued with information on Measure 3, Business Energy Assessments, where the city will encourage licensed businesses to participate in a no-cost energy assessment of their physical premises every three years, or upon change of ownership. This assessment will be integrated into the business licensing process. Staff is recommending that this program be established as a mandatory program due to the low success rate of voluntary assessments.

Chair Stillman stated that she would like to see some creative way of marketing this to Council. She suggested a possible video contest for Southwestern business and arts majors showing videos of satisfied customers who have saved money.

Commissioner Mosolgo asked if part of our pitch when we do these assessments was that this could be a potential marketing opportunity for their company. Manager Reed responded that it was.

Director Meacham added that this is a pretty urgent issue with the business licensing process starting up at the end of November and that there would be very limited funding in our partnership program next year to do the Home Energy Upgrade program. He added that every bit of resource that we can release from this program and place on that program would make both programs more efficient.

Chair Stillman asked about the term "mandatory energy assessment" and questioned whether there might be a different, less offensive label we could use. Manager Reed responded that that had been a focus.

Advanced Planning Manager Batchelder gave an update on Measure 6, Smart Growth Around Trolley Stations, which includes Urban Core Specific Plan Implementation and the H Street Corridor Study.

Based on a comment in the staff report that the Chula Vista Redevelopment Corporation and City Council chose not to pursue the program at this time, but left open the option to do so in the future, Chair Stillman asked if the visualization was moving forward. Planning Manager Batchelder responded that there were a lot of issues that had caused that to be delayed.

Commissioner Gilgun asked if the H Street Simulation would be published at a Council meeting. Manager Batchelder responded that the Redevelopment & Housing Division was the primary staff assigned to that, and that he expected that it would be going to Council.

Commissioner Mosolgo asked if they were looking at alternatives like bridges for pedestrian traffic. Manager Batchelder responded that they were not at this time.

Environmental Resource Manager Reed gave an overview of Measure #5, the Solar & Energy Efficiency Conversion Program, and discussed the status and next steps. He also discussed Measure 7, the Turf Lawn Conversion Program, and called attention to the newly designed NatureScape brochure. He stated that there were almost 200 certified yards and gardens in Chula Vista, making us the #1 city in the County. Manager Reed added that we had been recently awarded a new grant to distribute 300 NatureScape-in-a-box kits. He also discussed updating municipal regulations and California's Model Landscape Ordinance.

Commission Mosolgo asked whether homeowner associations' restrictive guidelines on landscaping had evolved over time to where they would be open to conversions. Manager Reed responded that there had been a lot of dialog on both the state and local levels.

Commissioner Cory asked how one particular turf area works for common areas of a subdivision. Director Meacham responded that HOAs could choose to make it part of their associate dues, or work with the City and look at the legal instruments necessary to do the tax assessment.

Conservation & Environmental Services Director Meacham gave a brief summary on Implementation Financing. He stated that the San Diego Gas & Electric partnership continues to be a valuable component that has allowed a lot of programs to move forward. Council approved and the City Manager requested at the time to focus on franchise fees and local fee authority as a permanent revenue structure to insure that these programs continue in the future. We continue to negotiate with SDG&E to implement that. He added that another important component that the City Manager included was the public bond option, which is the biggest source of resources, and which will pay for the upfront costs for homeowners and small businesses so they don't have to address the barrier of initial capital cost. Director Meacham stated that we will also be going forward this year with permit fees. He next briefly discussed grants and funding.

Director Meacham then asked for comments from the board.

Chair Stillman stated that she would like to see Measure 3, Business Energy Assessments, which is now voluntary, become mandatory when a residential or commercial remodel or new build occurs. She added that the 20% savings should be across the board for all climate zones rather than only 15% for the westside. Director Meacham and Manager Reed responded by explaining the cost effectiveness between older homes on the west and newer homes in the east.

Vice Chair Gilgun stated that if the Energy Subcommittee and City staff were going to recommend 15% and 20%, that she was fine with that. She also stated that as far as exemptions, the Energy Subcommittee had recommended that staff come back with additional information, and she would rather wait for that additional information about how many additions and alterations are 1000 square feet before the commission makes a recommendation. Manager Reed responded that the whole Ordinance would be coming back to the RCC.

Commissioner Mosolgo asked if staff could give a defense about how they had come up with the 1,000 square feet or the 10,000 square feet designation. Manager Reed responded that it was based on the consultants' professional input.

Commissioner Cory stated that she was concerned about unintended consequences if we put too much of a burden on some remodels. She agreed that they needed more information.

ACTION: Chair Stillman made a motion to consider strongly approving The Climate Measures 12-Month Progress Report and to add two comments: 1) That Climate Measure 3, Business Energy Assessments, be made mandatory, and 2) That while we strongly support new additions and remodels to be done in the most energy efficient, water efficient, and climate-friendly manner possible, we need further information regarding square footages before we can make a recommendation on either low-rise residential, high-rise residential, or non-residential properties.

Commissioner Gilgun seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Rahimzadeh and Ulloa absent.

DIRECTOR OF CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMENTS


Director Meacham discussed being in the process of adding new members to the Climate Change Subcommittee.

CHAIR COMMENTS

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m. to a regular meeting on Monday, August 24, 2009, at 4:00 pm in Council Chambers, 276 Fourth Avenue, Chula Vista, CA 91910.

Prepared by:


Sheryl Fields
Sr. Secretary